

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

DEPT OF THE TREASURY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

INFO USSAGE NAKHON PHANOM THLAND

CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMDT COGARD

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

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COGARD FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 10 EA PRESS SUMMARY

1. INDOCHINA

END OF US AID TO VN AND CAMBODIA URGED BY 12 SENATORS

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AND 70 REPRESENTATIVES SUNDAY, WHO INVITED PRES DISCUSS

WITH CONGRESS HOW TO PHASE IT OUT. PRES TOLD CHITRIB INTERVIEWERS OVER WEEKEND HE WOULD BE WILLING HALT AID IN THREE YEARS IF SUFFICIENT FUNDS APPROPRIATED UNTIL THEN (WSJ). MEMBERS OF CONGRESS FOR PEACE THROUGH LAW (BIPARTISAN GROUP THAT WROTE PRES ASKING EARLY AND COMPLETE END TO US MIL/ECON AID TO SVN AND CAMBODIA) SAY CONTINUED AID WILL NOT BRING TWO COUNTRIES CLOSER TO LASTING PEACE. LETTER STATES MORE AID MAY PROLONG LIVES OF GOVTS, BUT "WE CAN SEE NO HUMANITARIAN OR NATIONAL INTEREST THAT JUSTIFIES" COST (WP). SIGNERS INCLUDE SENS HUMPHREY, MCGOVERN AND REPS UDALL AND DRINAN (AP, NYT); GROUP HEADED BY SEN CLARK. LETTER ASSERTS THIS IS NOT TIME TO START "ACRIMONIOUS NATIONAL DEBATE" ON INDOCHIN AND GROUP PREPARED OR SERIOUS, UNEMOTIONAL DIALOG ON PROBLEM OF ENDING US INVOLVEMENT (NYDN SPECIAL).

CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST SEEN SETTING STAGE FOR POSSIBLE COMPROMISE ON INDOCHINA AID QUESTION (AP, SUN; PHINQ). CHITRIB QUOTES PRES IN INTERVIEW THAT "IMPORTANT FOR SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA TO SURVIVE" BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN ENDLESS SUPPORT FOR THEM. PRES QUOTES AMB MARTIN THAT AID AT LEVEL OF 1976 REQUESTS OVER TWO YEARS "WOULD IN EFFECT END OR TERMINATE SUMS OF THIS MAGNITUDE."

US OFFICIAL SAYS FAMILIES OF US DIPLOMATS IN PP TOLD TO GET READY FOR EVACUATION THIS WEEK BECAUSE OF CITY'S INCREASING ISOLATION AND BAD LIVING CONDITIONS (WSJ; NYT). OFFICIAL STATES ONLY ABOUT SIX WIVES IN CAPITAL, AND THEY WILL LEAVE ON REGULAR FLIGHTS DURING WEEK (AP WP, NYDN, CHITRIB, SUN, PHINQ). DIPLOMATIC SOURCE SAYS US EMBASSY OFFICIALS WITH PRIVATE GENERATORS WERE TOLD FUEL RATION WILL BE CUT. GKR AMMO SUPPLY REPORTED LOW; ENOUGH FOOD FOR OVER MONTH, BUT FUEL FOR LESS THAN MONTH (AP PHINQ, SUN, CHITRIB).

WP FRONT-PAGES AP PHOTO OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEE MOTHER TRYING TO FEED CRYING CHILD AT SVN CAMP; SAME PHOTO ON CHITRIB PAGE TWO.

NYT'S SCHANBERG IN PP DESCRIBES BATTLE FOR CONTROL OF UNCLASSIFIED

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MEKONG AS STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL O PP. SITUATION NOT YET GRAVE AND CAMBODIANS - UNLIKE SOME FOREIGNERS - SHOW NO SIGNS OF PANIC. QUOTES US EMBASSY OFFICIAL THAT AMMO SITUATION "DANGEROUS," AND IF MEKONG STAYS CLOSED TWO MORE WEEKS IT WILL BE CRITICAL UNLESS WE "GET ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES BY AIRLIFT." NOTES "MODEST" AIRLIFT FROM THAILAND HAS MAXIMUM OF TEN FLIGHTS DAILY WITH TOTAL 150-TON CAPACITY, ABOUT ONE-TENTH CITY'S DAILY

NEEDS. AIRLIFT CAN'T BE EXPANDED FURTHER UNDER TERMS OF CONTRACT, ACCORDING AMERICANS. ONLY OTHER APPARENT ALTERNATIVE IS CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR BIGGER USAF-RUN AIRLIFT; BUT, ACCORDING RELIABLE SOURCES, ADMIN RELUCTANT TO MOUNT SUCH AIRLIFT FOR FEAR OF ANTAGONIZING CONGRESS. MANY WESTERN DIPLOMATS THINK UNLESS MEKONG OPENED REASONABLY SOON, US MIGHT NEED TURN TO AIRLIFT AS LAST RESORT.

SCHANBERG REPORTS US MEANWHILE PRESSING GKR DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO CLEAR MINES, WREST CONTROL OF RIVER BANKS. SO FAR REPORTS NOT OPTIMISTIC, AND KHMER NAVY HAVING LITTLE SUCCESS IN CUTTING WIRES OF "PRIMITIVE," COMMAND-DETONATED MINES. NOTES INCREASING DIFFICULTY IN RECRUITING CREWS FOR MEKONG CONVOY AFTER DAMAGE DONE TO SHIPS RECENTLY,

AND AMERICANS AND KHMERS TALK OF TRAINING CAMBODIAN NAVY PERSONNEL TO MAN SUPPLY SHIPS. DESPITE RISKS, US REPORTED PLANNING TRY RUN ANOTHER CONVOY THROUGH WITHIN NEXT WEEK. SCHANBERG TRIES TO ASSESS SUPPLY SITUATION IN PP, BUT REPORTS VARY; GUESSES ,HERE MAY BE ENOUGH FOOD AND FUEL IN CITY FOR MONTH OR MORE. BELIEVES SOME OFFICIALS GIVE HIGH FIGURES IN EFFORT TO PREVENT PANIC. FINDS PP MOOD DOES NOT SUGGEST SITUATION DESPERATE, THOUGH SOME FOREIGNERS WONDER IF "FATALISTIC CALM" MAY PROVE MISLEADING. BUT SOME DIPLOMATS AND WESTERN OBSERVERS WONDER WHETHER US PAINTING DARK PICTURE IN HOPE OF WINNING MORE MIL AID FROM CONGRESS. OPINES THAT AID QUESTION APPEARS PIVOTAL TO CONFLICT OUTCOME, AND "OVERSHADOWS EVERY OTHER CONSIDERATION HERE."

WP'S GREENWAY IN PP ALSO DISCUSSES MEKONG SITUATION. SEES KEY TO SUCCESS AS GREATER GKR CONTROL OF BANKS. QUOTES UNCLASSIFIED

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KHMER NAVY OPERATIONS OFFICER THAT BOATS COULD BE CONVERTED TO MINE SWEEPERS, BUT THEN WOULD BE VULNERABLE TO ENEMY FIRE FROM BANKS. NOTES EMBASSY OFFICIAL'S STATEMENT THAT EVEN IF RIVER OPEN, FANK WILL RUN OUT OF AMMO BEFORE END OF MARCH UNLESS CONGRESS APPROPRIATES MORE FOR MIL AID. ADDS THAT DISAGREEMENT EXISTS ON HOW SERIOUS AMMO SHORTAGE REALLY IS, BUT ALMOST EVERYONE AGREES SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON MEKONG BATTLE. REVIEWS RECENT TOLL, MENTIONING JUNKS AND OTHER SMALL CRAFT THAT ATTACH SELVES TO CONVOY TO BRING GOODS TO PP BUT NO RECORD KEPT OF THEIR LOSSES. KHMER NAVY RIVER FORCE HAS ABOUT 200 BOATS, WITH 120 DEPLOYABLE AT ONE TIME, AND NAVY PERSONNEL "LITERALLY DECIMATED" BY CASUALTIES SINCE BEGINNING OF YEAR. STATES MINES, THAT HAVE ADDED NEW DIMENSION TO RIVER WARFARE, COULD BE HAND-MADE OR SUPPLIED BY

CHINESE. BELIEVES ANOTHER EFFORT TO BREAK BLOCKADE WILL BE MADE WITHIN TWO WEEKS, BUT UNLESS NEW AND MAJOR EFFORT MADE TO PUT MORE GKR TROOPS ALONG RIVER BANKS, MIL EXPERTS GLOOMY ABOUT CONVOY'S CHANCES OF ESCAPING HEAVY LOSSES.

VN PRESS AGENCY ANNOUNCES THIEU WILL AMNESTY 404 COMMON CRIMINALS FOR TET, AND DECREE WOULD ALSO EFFECT UNSPECIFIED NUMBER OF OTHER PRISONERS WHOSE CASES BEING STUDIED (REUTER, WP).

GVN COMMAND REPORTS ITS FORCES SUFFERED HEAVY LOSSES IN BATTLE NEAR TAY NINH, 55 MILES NW OF SAIGON, BUT DEALT NVA SEVERE SETBACK NEAR DA NANG. SAYS BOTH BATTLES TRIGGERED BY SVN OPERATIONS TO FORESTALL NVA AND VC ATTACKS DURING AND AFTER TET (AP SUN, NYDN, PHINQ, CHITRIB, SUN).

NYT'S BUTTERFIELD FROM DELTA VILLAGE NOTES FARMERS REVERT TO TRADITIONAL METHODS OF RICE PEST CONTROL BECAUSE OF VAST INCREASE IN PRICE OF OIL-BASED PRODUCTS AND CUTS IN US AID. INSECTICIDES, FERTILIZER, GAS FOR WATER PUMPS GETTING TOO COSTLY, THOUGH THEY HELPED INCREASE PRODUCTION AND BROUGHT MEASURE OF PROSPERITY. DESCRIBES VILLAGE WHERE RESIDENTS FEAR OUTPUT WILL DROP. DISTINCTION BETWEEN OPPOSING SIDES "TENDS TO BLUR" WITH WAR THAT SEEMS TO SCOOP UP PEOPLE AND DEPOSIT THEM AT RANDOM ON DIFFERENT UNCLASSIFIED

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SIDES. INHABITANTS CONSIDER MEMBERS ON BOTH SIDES STILL PART OF FAMILY.

2. CHINA

UPI (HK) REPORTS PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL SUNDAY CALLED FOR TIGHTER CONTROLS OVER ALL SECTORS OF PRC SOCIETY. SAID THIS IS "KEY QUESTION" RAISED IN RECENT NPC DOCUMENTS, AND NECESSARY TO TAKE STERN MEASURES TO PREVENT RISE OF CAPITALIST TENDENCIES AND ENABLE PROGRAMS OUTLINED DURING NPC BE CARRIED OUT (NYDN). CHINA WATCHERS SEES EDITORIAL AS SIGNAL FOR NEW CAMPAIGN AIMED AT PREVENTION, OR AT LEAST REDUCING, POLITICAL INFIGHTING MARKING MOST OF 1974; ALSO SEEN AS REFLECTION OF NEW LEADERSHIP'S "HARD-NOSED" ATTITUDE AND ITS DETERMINATION TO MOVE AHEAD WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (UPI, WP).

SUN'S WU, IN HK, NOTES PD EDIT THEORIZED ABOUT MAO'S DICTATORSHIP DOCTRINE, WHILE READJUSTING TASK OF YEAR-OLD ANTI-LIN PIAO/CONFUCIUS CAMPAIGN. FINDS THIS IN SHARP CONTRAST WITH PAPER'S EDITORIAL EXACTLY YEAR

AGO WHEN IT OFFICIALLY UNVEILED LIN-CONFUCIUS CRITICISM. RECALLS COURSE OF CRITICISM CAMPAIGN WAS THWARTED LAST SUMMER BY WHAT LATER WAS ATTRIBUTED TO UNPRINCIPLED CRITICISM OF HIGH OFFICIALS THAT HAMPERED PRODUCTION, UNDER "DEMOCRACY" LABEL. "OBVIOUSLY WITH THIS IN MIND," EDIT DROPPED STRONG HINTS SUCH UNRULY CONDUCT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WOULD BE SUBJECT TO RIGORS OF PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP. TERMS IT SIGNIFICANT ALSO THAT EDITORIAL SHOWS NEW PRC LEADERS SERIOUS-MINDED IN MAINTAINING POLITICAL STABILITY TO INSURE SMOOTH PROGRESS OF ECONOMIC PROGRAM.

NYT'S SHABAD REPORTS PEKING HAS ENHANCED HER GROWING ROLE AS PETROLEUM EXPORTER BY COMPLETING FIRST LARGE-DIAMETER PIPELINE FROM MANCHURIAN OILFIELDS TO YELLOW SEA TANKER TERMINAL. PRC RADIO BROADCAST RECENTLY REVEALED 715-MILE PROJECT, AS PART OF POLICY OF GREATER DISCLOSURE OF CHINESE ECONOMIC GAINS.

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IN LOS ANGELES RECENTLY TO ADDRESS COSTUME COUNCIL OF COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART, STANLEY MARCUS DEMONSTRATED SIX OF 212 CHINESE CEREMONIAL ROBES FROM NEIMAN-MARCUS COLLECTION, PURCHASED AT CANTON FAIR AND SELLING NOW AT 4-8 THOUSAND DOLS (LAT FEB 7).

3. JAPAN

JOC (TOKYO) SAYS ESSO WITHDRAWS FROM JOINT PROJECT TO EXPLORE OFFSHORE OIL, GAS RESOURCES ON PACIFIC SIDE OF HONSHU; ERSTWHILE PARTNER TEIKOKU OIL THURSDAY INSISTED ESSO WOULD REJOIN PROJECT LATER.

AP (WP, PHINQ) CITES MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY REPORT PANAMANIAN FREIGHTER "RIO TRADER" SANK SUNDAY 800 MILES SW OF TOKYO; ALL 25 CREWMEN RESCUED BY MSA PATROL BOAT.

WSJ (BUHAREST) SAYS JAPAN-ROMANIA JOINT VENTURE BEGINS BUILDING PLANT IN CURTEA TO MAKE PROTEIN-RICH YEAST FROM PETROCHEMICALS; PRODUCTION GOAL 60,000 TONS FIRST YEAR, RISING TO 120,000 TONS BY 1980.

JOC'S CULLISON (TOKYO) CITES EPA OFFICIAL PREDICTION OF MINUS TWO PERCENT REAL GROWTH IN JFY ENDING MARCH 31, BECAUSE JAPAN RECESSION DEEPER THAN ANTICIPATED.

NYT'S HALLORAN IN TOKYO REVIEWS NEW STUDY BY "INCREASINGLY VIGOROUS" FTC SHOWING ECONOMIC POWER OF ZAIBATSU

CONGLOMERATES GREATER THAN PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT: 175
CORE FIRMS OF SIX MAJOR ZAIBATSU HOLD 21.9 PERCENT OF
ALL CORPORATE CAPITAL IN JAPAN. SAYS REPORT PART OF FTC
CAMPAIGN TO REVISE MONOPOLY LAW, BACKED BY MIKI BUT
RESISTED BY BUSINESS AND "POWERFUL" LDP MEMBERS. ADDS
REPORT SHOWS TRADING COMPANIES HELP ZAIBATSU FIRMS
CONSOLIDATE POWER, WHICH TRADING FIRM SPOKESMEN
DENOUNCE AS ONE-SIDED FOR FAILURE TO GRASP "CORRECTLY"
THEIR ROLE IN GROWTH, INTERNATIONALIZATION OF JAPAN'S
ECONOMY.

4. AUSTRALIA UNCLASSIFIED

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JOC'S STOVE IN SYDNEY NOTES ONLY AUSSIE STEEL FINISHER,
JOHN LYSAGHT LTD, RAISED 63 MILLION DOLS IN US TO
HELP FINANCE NEW 80-INCH HOT STRIP MILL IN VICTORIA,
HALF FROM EXIM BANK AT USUAL 7 PERCENT RATE, OTHER HALF
FROM 11-BANK SYNDICATE HEADED BY PITTSBURGH NATIONAL.

5. NEW ZEALAND

JOC (AUCKLAND) SAYS US-OWNED NEW ZEALAND SUPERIOR
DEVELOPMENT CO WITHDRAWS FROM CONSORTIUM TO EXPLORE,
DEVELOP TASMAN BAY OIL, BECAUSE GNZ INTENDS TO TAKE
51 PERCENT OF ANY OIL PRODUCTION, IN RETURN FOR PAYING
40 PERCENT OF EXPLORATION COSTS.

6. PACIFIC ISLANDS

WP'S OBERDORFER (PHINQ) SEES US, MARIANA ISLANDERS
ABOUT TO SIGN "PERMANENT AFFILIATION" PACT AND ALMOST
CERTAINLY PROCLAIM "COMMONWEALTH OF NORTHERN MARIANA
ISLANDS" BY JOINT COVENANT WITHIN "NEXT FEW DAYS."
NOTES ARRANGEMENT TO BE APPROVED BY PLEBISCITE AND
US CONGRESS WOULD GIVE 14,000 ISLANDERS FULL RIGHTS
AND PRIVILEGES AS US CITIZENS," WITH SELF GOVT, EXCEPT
IN FOREIGN POLICY, DEFENSE. SAYS US AGREES TO PAY
AT LEAST 140 MILLION DOLS IN BUDGETARY SUPPORT, LAND
RENT OVER 17 YEAR PERIOD, BUT COMMENTS FORMER MAY
BE OPEN-ENDED BECAUSE ISLANDS HAVE FEW RESOURCES
EXCEPT BREATHTAKING SCENERY, STRATEGIC LOCATION.

OBSERVES SOME ISLANDERS OPPOSE PACT AS "ROBBERY" OF
THEIR LANDS, "SELLOUT" OF THEIR DESTINY. ADDS DOD
PUSHED DEAL, IN HOPE OF BUILDING MODERN, AIR-NAVY
BASE ON TINIAN; BUT CONGRESS DELAYING FUNDS, PROBABLY
LONG AS US RETAINS ACCESS TO JAPANESE AND KOREAN BASES.

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

I. INDOCHINA

CHITRIB NOTES IN INTERVIEW WITH ITS CORRESPONDENTS,
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PRES POINTED, "ALBEIT BRIEFLY AND SOMEWHAT HESITANTLY,"
TO ROAD OUT OF VN: THAT ADMIN WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE
"ACCEPTED FIGURE OVER TWO-YEAR FISCAL PERIOD AND
SAY 'THIS IS IT. IF THE CONGRESS WILL APPROPRIATE
IT, I WOULD AGREE NOT TO ASK FOR ANY MORE.'"
PRES LATER CORRECTED STATEMENT TO THREE-YR PERIOD.
CHITRIB SEES OBVIOUS FLAWS IN COMMITMENT: NO SPECIFIC
AMOUNT REQUESTED; NO ASSURANCE FORD WILL BE IN WH
TO CARRY OUT COMMITMENT; WAS CLEAR HE DIDN'T WANT TO
BE PINNED DOWN; AND HE LEANED ON AMB MARTIN'S JUDGMENT --
AND LATTER'S CONFIDENCE DOESN'T SEEM SHARED BY THIEU,
WHO IS SO JITTERY ABOUT HIS PROSPECTS THAT HE IS
CLOSING OPPOSITION PAPERS.

CHITRIB BELIEVES WHATEVER FLAWS IN PRES' STATEMENT,
UNLESS HE MAKES SOME SUCH COMMITMENT HE IS UNLIKELY
TO GET MORE MIL AID THIS YEAR AND POSSIBLY NONE NEXT.
PRES WILL ALSO HAVE TO OFFER CONCRETE EVIDENCE THAT
IN TWO YEARS SOMETHING WILL IMPROVE THAT "WILL JUSTIFY
HOLDING OUT FOR IT." CHITRIB DOES NOT AGREE US
CREDIBILITY STILL AT STAKE, SINCE CREDIBILITY "DOES
NOT DEMAND PURSUING A MIRAGE." WE MUST MAKE CLEAR
THAT UNILATERAL COMMITMENT ENDED WITH C-F. SEES
PRES' OFFER AS FRAMEWORK FOR ORDERLY WAY OUT, AND BELIEVES
CONGRESS MAY BE WILLING MAKE BARGAIN IF HE CAN MAKE GOOD
CASE FOR HOLDING OUT 2-3 YEARS MORE.

SAFIRE (NYT) NOTES SHOCKING VIEW OF CAMBODIAN CHILDREN
KILLED BY ROCKET BROUGHT HORROR OF WAR INTO US
LIVING ROOMS AGAIN. BELIEVES IF IT HAD BEEN US
ROCKET, UPROAR WOULD HAVE BEEN HEARD IN CONGRESS AND
THROUGHOUT LAND TO "STOP THE KILLING"; BUT IT WAS
COMMUNIST ROCKET, SO WE "SHUDDER AND TURN AWAY."
THIS BECAUSE WE ARE BORED BY ENDLESS SEA WAR, AND
FRUSTRATED BY OUR INABILITY TO END IT. POINTS OUT
LARGE CONGRESSIONAL GROUP SERIOUSLY PROPOSES TO LET
IT END BY CUTTING OFF SVN SUPPLIES SO THEY "WILL LOSE
AND BE QUIET." ASSERTION THIEU "CORRUPT DICTATOR"
AND SO UNWORTHY OF OUR AID BEING MADE BY DOVES WITH
VESTED INTEREST IN HIS DOWNFALL BECAUSE THEY
PREDICTED GVN COLLAPSE WHEN US TROOPS LEFT; HIS
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SURVIVAL IS REPROOF TO THOSE WHO SAID HE HAD NO INDIGENOUS SUPPORT. EMPHASIZES NO SVN TROOPS KILLING ANYONE IN NVN. US OFFICIALS FOOLISHLY REPEAT MISLEADING OLD ARGUMENTS ABOUT LIGHT-AT-THE-END-OF-TUNNEL.

SAFIRE FINDS PRES' RECENT "DESPERATE PROMISE" TO END IT ALL IN THREE YRS ALSO MISLEADING. WE SHOULD KNOW BY NOW EXTERNALLY-FINANCED COMMUNIST AGGRESSION PREPARED FIGHT ON FOR DECADES, AND NON-COMMUNIST MAJORITY IN THOSE COUNTRIES ALSO PREPARED FIGHT JUST AS LONG IF WE MATCH SUPPLIES FROM OUTSIDE. FORESEES THAT WE MIGHT BE EMBARRASSED BY CONSEQUENCES OF COMMUNIST VICTORY; WHEN VP RAISED POINT HE WAS DENOUNCED BY PEOPLE WHO ARE CERTAIN NO WHOLESALE EXECUTIONS WILL FOLLOW COMMUNIST VICTORY. SUCH CERTAINTY MUST BE COMFORTING, SINCE IT RUNS CONTRARY TO MUCH EXPERIENCE.

SAFIRE STATES REASON US SHOULD CONTINUE AID TO PEOPLE FIGHTING COMMUNIST TAKE-OVER IS BECAUSE WE ARE ON SIDE OF HUMAN FREEDOM. WONDERS WHY WE ARE SO AFRAID TO ASSERT THIS RIGHT THING TO DO; CAN BE COSTLY, PAINFUL,

NERVE-CRACKING AND, WHEN THIEU JAILS JOURNALISTS, INFURIATING, "BUT ESSENTIALLY MORAL." SEES MEASURE OF SUCCESS IN HELPING ALLIES CONTINUE RESIST LONG AS PRESSURE IS ON. SEEING SEN JACKSON BEGINNING WAFFLE, WONDERS WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE WE'RE BECOMING. EITHER US WILL REMAIN STRONG FORCE AGAINST WORLDWIDE TOTALITARIAN COERCION, OR WILL "TURN INWARD AND DOWNWARD."

8. PORTUGUESE TIMOR

WSJ'S HARTLEY IN DILI REVIEWS "DISQUIETING" PROSPECTS FOR PORTUGAL'S "MOST REMOTE, MOST IGNORED, LEAST DEVELOPED" COLONY, TIMOR, AS IT PREPARES TO CHOOSE OWN FUTURE IN AFTERMATH OF LEFT-WING COUP IN LISBON. COMPARES COLONY TO HOUSE IN WHICH PORTUGUESE HAVE LOCKED 650,000 TIMORESE FOR 450 YEARS, CUT OFF FROM ALL OUTSIDE DEVELOPMENTS, ESPECIALLY NEWS OF RECENT INDEPENDENCE

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MOVEMENTS. BUT IN SPITE OF ALL, NATIVES ACCEPT PORTUGUESE, AND HAVE WOVEN THEM INTO THEIR MYTHS AND RELIGION, IN "MYSTICAL ROLE" WHICH NEW LEADERS WILL

NOT CAST OFF EASILY.

FIRST POLITICAL PARTIES FORMED IN APRIL, AFTER LISBON COUP, AND NOW COMPETE AMONG 96 PERCENT ILLITERATE TIMORESE FOR SUPPORT IN LONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION, WHICH OOV PIRES SAYS MAY COME EARLY AS OCTOBER. SOME LEADERS HOPE TO STAY WITH PORTUGAL UNTIL IMOR BECOMES MORE VIABLE; OTHERS FAVOR INDEPENDENCE; THIRD GROUP WISHES TO HEED GOI CALL "TO JOIN BROTHERS" ON INDONESIAN HALF OF ISLAND. NOTES ONLY POINT ON WHICH LEADERS AGREE IS THAT PEOPLE ARE IMMATURE, ECONOMY TOO WEAK TO STAND ALONE.

OBSERVES GOI FEAR INDEPENDENCE FOR COLONY MIGHT SPUR INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS IN CELEBES, MOLUCCAS, AND MIGHT EVEN TEMPT INDONESIAN TIMOR TO BE FIRST TO SECEDE . BELIEVES SUCH FRAGMENTATION OF INDONESIA WOULD INCREASE UNCERTAINTY IN REGION ALREADY DESTABILIZED BY PAPUA'S PLAN TO SEPARATE FROM AUSTRALIA, MOSLEM REVOLT IN MINDANAO, AND WOULD THUS THREATEN HUGE OIL INVESTMENTS IN AREA. GOI LEADERS, "WHO SEE REDS UNDER EVERY BED" SINCE CRUSHING ABORTIVE PKI COUP, SEEM CONCERNED BY LISBON'S OVERTURES TO PEKING, EVEN THOUGH OUTSIDERS POINT OUT CHINA MORE INTENT ON IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH SEA THAN SUBVERTING REGION.

IN OTHERWISE GLUM PROSPECTS FOR ECONOMY, FINDS SOME HOPE IN FACT AUSSIES PROSPECTING FOR MANGANESE, CHROME AND GOLD, AND PROBABLE EXISTENCE OF OIL, SHOWN BY FACT NATIVES HAVE ALWAYS USED SEEPAGE INTO PONDS TO BURN FOR LIGHT.

9. CHINA

PHILA BULLETIN FEELS RECENT APPARENT SUCCESS OF CHOU OVER RADICAL REVOLUTIONARY IDEOLOGS AUGURS WELL. ADDS THAT IF PREMIER CAN BUILD IN POLITICAL STABILITY PREPARATORY TO TRANSITION OF POWER LOOMING OR PRC, UNCLASSIFIED

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IT WILL BE REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT (FEB 5).

LAT'S ELEGANT, IN HK, REPORTS EXTREME LEFTISTS WHO STILL EXERCISE NOMINAL CONTROL OVER SHANGHAI HAVE SERVED NOTICE THEY WILL FIGHCHOU'S NONIDEOLOGICAL PLAN OF IMPROVING CHINA'S ECONOMY BY GRADUAL STEPS. SHARP STRUGGLE COULD ERUPT FOR SHANGHAI CONTROL; MODERATES "WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY PREVAIL," BUT FIGHT WILL NOT BE EASY (FEB 7).

10. JAPAN

GLOBE'S STORIN IN TOKYO (2/7) DESCRIBES OLDER GENERATION'S
AMBIVALENCE TOWARD WESTERN WAYS -- THEY ADOPT SOME,
REJECT OTHERS (LIKE WOMEN'S LIBERATION) TO PRESERVE
JAPANESE WAY OF LIFE. OBSERVES ATTITUDE HELPS KEEP
JAPAN RELATIVELY STABLE, AND COMPARED TO OTHER
INDUSTRIAL NATIONS FREE OF VIOLENT CRIME. BUT WITH
MASS MEDIA, JET TRAVEL SHRINKING WORLD, BELIEVES LAST
WORD YET TO BE HEARD, ESPECIALLY FROM YOUNG WOMEN.
INGERSOLL

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED BUDAPEST.

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